

# MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

401 North Washington Street, Suite 100  
Rockville, Maryland 20850

## MEETING MINUTES

May 25, 2005

7:00 p.m.

### ATTENDING

Patricia E. Cornish  
Holly Fechner  
Jodi Finkelstein  
Deborah Horan  
Shirley L. Johnson  
Resa Levy  
Regina Oldak  
Shelia Parker  
Gary P. Smith  
Yun Jung Yang

### STAFF

Paula Rodgers  
Judith Vaughan-Prather

### GUESTS

Barbara Heyman, Maryland CFW

### ABSENT

Jodi Grant  
Carol Lynn Green  
Tedi S. Osias

---

## I. CALL TO ORDER/APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES.....Cornish

President Cornish called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m. There were several additions to the meeting agenda: Two items were added under New Business. In addition, one new item was included with the Policy and Legislation Committee Report--an update on the change in State law regarding electronic access of court records. In addition, Commissioner Levy said that there was nothing new to report on the Women's Fair and she asked that this portion of the Liaison Reports be removed.

Upon the motion of Commissioner Smith, duly seconded by Commissioner Finkelstein and unanimously passed, the revised Agenda was approved.

Upon the motion of Commissioner Finkelstein, duly seconded by Commissioner Smith, the Minutes of April 27, 2005 were adopted as presented. She also asked that the adopted Minutes include as part of the record, the 2005 CFW Legislative Chart and it be revised to show that testimony was delivered on the "No Means No" legislation.

President Cornish briefly discussed the conduct of and participation in CFW meetings, encouraging commissioners to respect each other and not engage in “side bar” conversations during the CFW meetings.

## **II. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT**

### **A. CERB Proposals**

On May 5, the County Council held another worksession on the proposals laid out in the report of the Committee Evaluation and Review Board. Despite council staff and the county attorney’s recommendations against it, there is still some interest on the County Council for some form of a sunset provision for B/C/C’s. CFW will continue to monitor the issue.

### **B. Equal Pay Commission**

President Cornish reported that letters to Governor Ehrlich were signed and would be mailed to support the nominations of Wendy Kahn, Tracy Brown and Holly Fechner for positions on the Maryland Equal Pay Commission. The National Committee on Pay Equity voted unanimously to support Ms. Kahn’s nomination and also sent a letter of support to the Governor. A copy of CFW’s letters are also being mailed to Delegate Jean Cryor to ask for her support for the three nominations. A copy of the letters will also be sent to Senator Sharon Grosfeld for her information. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather will encourage the nominees to complete the on-line nomination forms as soon as possible.

### **C. New Commissioner Recruitment**

Commissioner Oldak reported that on May 9, the CFW Interview Panel, consisting of herself, Commissioners Yang and Horan, along with Executive Director Vaughan-Prather, finished interviewing candidates for the CFW. There were 16 well-qualified candidates, and recommendations for the 5 new commissioners have been sent to the County Executive’s Office. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather thanked the three commissioners for all their time, careful consideration, wisdom and hard work during this process.

### **D. Annual Planning Meeting**

At the April 27 Commission meeting, commissioners voted to hold the CFW Annual Planning Meeting in August. Once the new commissioners have been announced, they will be asked about their availability to meet on either August 24 or August 31. The date on which the majority of the commissioners are able to meet will be the date of the Annual Meeting. The decision will be made at the June CFW meeting.

### **E. President’s Advisory Council Meeting**

The second of this year’s meetings of the Presidents’ Advisory Council took place on Wednesday, May 4 at the New Fortune Restaurant in Gaithersburg. The group

consists of leaders of Montgomery County women's organizations. Senator Sharon Grosfeld and Delegate Jean Cryor provided insight into the 2005 Maryland General Assembly and a wrap-up of legislation of concern to women.

Because many of those who responded that they would attend, were not present at the dinner meeting, staff is considering taking RSVPs and collecting the money for the next dinner prior to the night of a meeting to avoid "no-shows."

F. Local CFW Focus Group – Maryland Women's Heritage Center

Former Commissioner Linda Shevitz, Education Equity Coordinator for the Maryland State Department of Education Jill Moss Greenberg are hosting a series of focus groups to discuss the Maryland Women's Heritage Center project. This will take place on Tuesday, June 7, from 6-8 p.m., at the Montgomery County Commission for Women's office. The presidents of local CFW's in the state of Maryland are being invited to attend and share their thoughts about the Maryland Women's Heritage Center project.

### III. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. CFW Presidential Elections

Commissioner Oldak submitted an intent to run for CFW president for 2005-2006. Nominations from the floor will be accepted at the June 22 meeting immediately before the election and will be held by secret ballot. Elections of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President will take place July. **Editor's Note:** Commissioner Horan also submitted an intent to run for the CFW presidency at the close of this evening's meeting.

B. Domestic Violence Task Force Legislation

Although several months ago there was some discussion about potential county legislation to create a Task Force on Domestic Violence, no further action has been taken. The CFW has a strong commitment to this Task Force and will continue its support in this area.

### IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Website Identification

Executive Director Vaughan-Prather received a letter from a woman who expressed concern about an alleged policy of Montgomery County to make available property owner's names on public websites, especially as it relates to the privacy rights and safety of victims of domestic violence. Ms. Vaughan-Prather checked into this and learned that this feature is not one of the county's website. There is a link to the state website to search for properties, but only by address and not by name. However, once one finds a particular address, the names of the property owners and other information (date of purchase, price paid, etc.) is available. Commissioner Finkelstein moved that

CFW send a response back to the concerned woman letting her know that this is not a function of the Montgomery County government, and that the letter also be sent to the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence which is working on this concern. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Oldak and unanimously passed.

- B. Ms. Vaughan-Prather reported that the *Daily Record* named its selections for Maryland's Top 100 Women. Letters from President Cornish will be sent congratulating all of the Montgomery County recipients on this recognition. Staff will add the county recipients to the CFW newsletter and Presidents' Advisory Council mailing lists.

**V. STAFF REPORT..... Vaughan-Prather**

**A. Budget**

The CFW FY 06 Budget was approved by the County Council. The full council commended the department on how much it does with so few resources, and was very complimentary to the CFW commissioners. In order to keep the funds in the FY 06 budget needed to update the Status of Women report, the department had to raise Counseling Center fees to produce \$13-15,000 in revenue. The new fee structure will take effect July 1, 2005. The Council is interested in the Status of Women project and was pleased that it will include data on immigrant and aging women in Montgomery County. Councilmembers also expressed approval of the proposed method of conducting the study.

Councilmember George Leventhal is interested in an intensive budget review of the CFW, sometime this summer. The review is to be conducted by the Office of Legislative Oversight.

**B. Multicultural Competencies Training**

On May 20, the Counseling and Career Center sponsored a Professional Training Workshop on Multicultural Competencies: Theory and Application. Dr. Wangiru Kamau, President and CEO of the African Immigrant and Refugees Foundation, and Dr. Vilma Nadel, an adjunct professor of psychology at George Mason University, kept the audience of 45 captivated with their interesting presentations. Dr. Kamau was a speaker at the October 2004 Diversity Day workshop (*One County Many Cultures: Serving Immigrant Women of Montgomery County*) that was sponsored by the CFW. Commissioners are invited to sit in on the Counseling Center's Professional Training Workshops, which are held monthly.

**C. National Commission for Women (NACW) Convention**

The 36<sup>th</sup> annual NACW Convention will be held July 13-19, 2005 in Miami, Florida. There is funding in CFW's budget for a representative to attend the conference. President Cornish, who has been invited to run for the Board of Directors or Executive Director Vaughan-Prather, will attend.

D. Fall Forum for Teen Girls: Preparing for Success

The 5<sup>th</sup> annual Fall Forum for Teen Girls will be held on November 19, 2005. The forum is aimed at all high school girls who plan to attend college or enter the workplace. Each year, the Montgomery County Bar Association is the primary sponsor of this event and CFW serves as a co-sponsor. Alyssa Philipp Snoots, Supervisor of Intake and Volunteer Services for the Counseling and Career Center serves as the CFW liaison on the planning committee. Commissioner Horan moved that CFW serve as a co-sponsor for the 2005 event. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Oldak and unanimously approved.

E. Tracy Stuger

Executive Director Vaughan-Prather announced that CFW Legislative and Budget Specialist Tracy Stuger graduated from the University of Maryland Law School on May 20. Ms. Stuger has three additional classes that she will complete over the summer and President Cornish and Ms. Vaughan-Prather thought it would be nice to acknowledge Ms. Stuger's accomplishment. A gift and card from the commissioners will be presented to Ms. Stuger.

**VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

A. Policy and Legislation (PAL) .....Oldak/Finkelstein

1. Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women (M-LAW) – Commissioner Oldak is on the bylaws and policy committee for the newly formed M-LAW organization. The Board of Directors will be made up of 15-25 persons. Members can be either organizations or individuals and the terms are for one year. Membership in M-LAW will cost \$100 per year and one must pledge to join by June 13 for the fiscal year that begins July 1st. Commissioner Oldak moved that CFW join M-LAW and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Horan.

Commissioner Levy then moved that CFW nominate a representative to serve on the board of directors; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Fechner and unanimously approved. It was agreed that the opportunity to serve as a CFW representative should be extended to the new commissioners who will be on board in July. Commissioner Oldak agreed to serve as the CFW representative if there was no one else interested in doing so. Ms. Oldak will notify Jessica Morgan, head of the M-LAW nominating committee of CFW's interest in serving in a board position and its pledge to join M-LAW as a member.

2. Federal Legislation – The Healthy Families Act (paid sick leave bill) has been introduced. The Violence Against Women act will be reintroduced.

3. State Legislation Update – Commissioner Finkelstein reported that the Governor's Office for Children, Youth and Families, which was set for sunset this year, was reorganized and some of its offices will be shifted elsewhere in state government. Governor Ehrlich plans to re-establish the office through an executive order. One

casualty of the reorganization is the Family Violence Council which was eliminated. Ms. Finkelstein offered to continue to monitor developments and to keep CFW informed, even after her term as a commissioner expires.

4. Electronic Access of Court Records – Commissioner Horan reported that Maryland Court of Appeals’ records will soon be accessible to the public on the internet. This could be yet another concern for victims of domestic violence. Print court records are currently available to the public now and all such records are public. However, there is concern by the victim advocate community about the impact of having these records posted on the internet, since it may facilitate access for people who may do harm to victims. Commissioner Oldak moved that Ms. Horan monitor the issue and, if necessary, draft a letter in consultation with Commissioner Finkelstein and President Cornish that expresses CFW’s concern. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Finkelstein and unanimously approved.

5. Predatory Lending Legislation – Commissioner Johnson reported that the County Council’s Predatory Lending Legislation is still on hold. The next hearing on the proposed legislation will take place on July 7 before the full County Council. Ms. Johnson said that one of the issues concerned the definition of “disparate impact” and what did one must do to show “disparate impact.” Ms. Johnson is planning to attend the July 7 hearing and will continue to monitor the issue.

B. Immigrant Women in Montgomery County (IWin) .....Yang/Levy/Horan

1. Fundraising Event – The IWin Committee hosted a fund-raising event on May 22 and it was a great success! The event, *Chocolate, Checks and Champagne* took place at Commissioner Horan’s home and over \$3,000 has been collected to provide for the Sexual Harassment in the Workplace and Employment Rights of Pregnant Women brochures to be printed in other languages. Commissioner Horan read a letter from Senator Edward Kennedy congratulating the Commission “for spearheading such an impressive initiative to protect Maryland’s immigrant women.”

In addition, other donations to the Know Your Rights campaign included a \$500 donation from the Montgomery County Office of Human Rights

Ms. Vaughan-Prather took a moment to acknowledge the entire IWin Committee, and especially Commissioner Yang’s overall dedication to Committee initiatives. Ms. Yang not only encouraged Global Employment Network to donate \$4,000 to print the brochures in Korean, she was also responsible for securing a donation of \$400 in champagne for the fundraiser. In addition, Ms. Yang’s sister who lives in California, donated \$500 to the Know Your Rights Campaign. In 2003, Ms. Yang secured many financial donations for the *Brave New World: Opportunities and Challenges for Immigrant Women in Montgomery County* seminar series. There was \$1,364 remaining from the Brave New World seminars and this money will also be used to help publish the employment rights brochures.

Special thanks is also due to Commissioner Horan who so graciously and generously made her home and daughters available to host the event.

The *Chocolate, Checks and Champagne* event was a wonderful time for former and current commissioners, friends and families to come together for a worthy cause. Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves and a former commissioner (Maggie Gordon) offered to help CFW in future endeavors. The IWin Committee now has enough funding to translate and publish the two brochures in Korean and Spanish

Executive Director Vaughan-Prather thanked the commissioners who were able to attend the May 22 event and those who made contributions. She extended heartfelt appreciation to all of the members of the IWin Committee for their extraordinary generosity in donating chocolate confections, paper goods, securing financial donations and in-kind goods and services and everything else that helped to make this event a success.

C. Technology and Girls (TAG) .....Smith

1. Summer Computer Camp Scholarships – Commissioner Smith announced that 14 applications for camp scholarships were received to date. CFW will have enough funding to provide scholarships for at least 32 girls. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather is working with Montgomery College’s Steve Cain, to develop a training agreement with Montgomery College that may make it possible for CFW to have a guaranteed number of slots in each of the three computer camps and a reduced camp fee.

Former CFW President Anne Sanderoff-Walker extended a challenge to members of the Women’s Business Owners organization to support the Summer Computer Camp Scholarship program. Ms. Sanderoff-Walker, herself donated a scholarship and others are coming in as well. A letter of appreciation is sent to every person who donates to the scholarship program.

2. MCPS Task Force – Executive Director Vaughan-Prather reported that the MCPS Task Force met last week. The Task Force is establishing committees that will review issues such as IT course curriculum, faculty training, and the impact of parents and the environment.

## VII. LIAISON REPORTS

A. Predatory Lending Forum

Commissioner Johnson said that the educational forum on predatory lending sponsored by the Montgomery County Office of Human Rights on May 18 was very well organized; however she noted that not many people were in attendance. The seminars were set up as panels and they were very informative and an excellent resource package was given to each participant. Ms. Johnson was able to arrange for portions of the event to be televised for viewing on Montgomery County Cable and can be used for training. President Cornish thanked Ms. Johnson for all her work on this initiative.

## VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. Institute for Women's Policy Research – The 8<sup>th</sup> Annual International Women's Policy Research Conference "*When Women Gain, So Does the World*" on June 19-21 in Washington, D.C. For more information, visit the IPWR website:  
<http://www.iwpr.org/Conference2005/Schedule.htm>
- B. National Partnership for Women and Families – Annual luncheon on June 13 at 11:30 at the Washington Hilton Hotel.
- C. Congratulations were extended to Commissioner Johnson who received several prestigious recognitions during the week of April 23-29:
  - ❖ Community Service Award received from the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc.
  - ❖ NAACP's 2005 Civil Rights Award presented at the NAACP Montgomery County Branch's Freedom Fund Dinner.
  - ❖ Distinguished Leadership Award from Leadership Montgomery.
- D. Congratulations to Commissioner Finkelstein who finished her first Triathlon.

## IX. AJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission for Women, the meeting was adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

**Minutes Submitted By**  
**Paula S. Rodgers**  
**Montgomery County Commission for Women**



## **CFW Action and Follow-up Items**

- [ x ] 1. Executive Director Vaughan-Prather will complete the nomination for Wendy Kahn, Tracy Brown and Holly Fechner to serve on the Pay Equity Commission.
- [ x ] 2. CFW will send a response back to the woman who wrote to express concern that the Montgomery County government website contained a feature that allowed persons to search for the names of county property owners. CFW will refer the woman to the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence which is also concerned about the potential risks for the victims of domestic violence.
- [ ] 3. Staff will add the county recipients of the Daily Record's 100 Top Maryland Women to the CFW newsletter and Presidents' Advisory Council mailing lists.
- [ x ] 4. Commissioner Oldak will notify Jessica Morgan, head of the M-LAW nominating committee of CFW's interest in serving in a board position and its pledge to join M-LAW as a member.
- [ ] 5. Commissioner Finkelstein will continue to follow the status of the reorganization of the Office of Children, Youth and Families and keep the Commission for Women abreast of any issues of concern.
- [ ] 6. Commissioner Horan will monitor the electronic court records issue and, if necessary, draft a letter in consultation with Commissioner Finkelstein and President Cornish that expresses CFW's concern.
- [ ] 7. Commissioner Johnson is planning to attend the July 7 County Council hearing on predatory lending hearing and she will continue to monitor the issue.
- [ ] 8. Commission presidential election to be held at the June 23 meeting. So far, two commissioners have submitted their intent to run:
  - Reggie Oldak
  - Deborah Horan